GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3215
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New Crop Varieties
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India's Public sector agriculture research institutions led by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has released 310 new crop varieties during 2015-16 and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether new crop varieties have the potential to increase the farm production and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these new crop varieties also play an important role in handling nutritional deficiency in grains/crops and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether there has been any change in the cropping pattern to exploit the potential of new crops varieties in the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to help in increasing farm production in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT)

(a) The National Agricultural Research System (NARS) comprising Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) has released 389 new varieties of different field crops during the years 2015 (81) and 2016 (308) through Central Sub-Committee on Crop Standards, Notification and Release of Varieties for Agricultural Crops. These include, 202 varieties of cereals, 66 of oilseeds, 51 of pulses, 36 of fibre crops, 24 of forage crops and 10 varieties of sugar crops.

(b) The new varieties of crops have the potential to increase the farm production as these are identified and released on the basis of yield superiority in multi-location testing compared to best check varieties.

(c) The ICAR has developed a number of varieties with enhanced nutritional quality in several crops e.g. high zinc and high protein in rice, high zinc in wheat, quality protein (high lysine & tryptophan) in maize, low erusic acid & glucosinolate in mustard, high iron in lentil and pearlmillet, etc. to meet the nutritional security.

(d) In general there is no major shift in cropping pattern at large scale in widely adopted cropping systems in the country. The new varieties are developed and tested for suitability in the existing cropping systems and agro-ecologies and accordingly released for cultivation under these conditions to exploit their potential. However, the short duration, high yielding and stress tolerant varieties of foxtail millet (SIA 3085 and Suryanandi) and pigeonpea (ICPL 88039) helped in changing the cropping pattern beneficially in some areas in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh where cultivation of these varieties was observed to be more remunerative. Early maturing varieties of mungbean, Virat and Shikha, are released to diversify cereal based cropping system as these are suitable for summer cultivation.

(e) The ICAR in collaboration with SAUs has taken several initiatives to increase the farm production by development of high yielding varieties resistant to diseases and pests; tolerant to submergence, salinity, terminal heat and drought; development of hybrids in different crops and adoption of improved production technologies. Breeder seed to the tune of 1.27 lakh quintals of improved varieties/hybrids of field crops was produced and supplied to indenting agencies during 2015-2016 for strengthening and sustaining the seed chain. A large number of front line demonstrations of different crops are organized to demonstrate the new varieties and technologies at farmers fields.

Besides, the Central Government schemes like, Bringing Green Revolution in Eastern India, National Food Security Mission, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna, National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture, National Pulses Development Programme, etc. are implemented to increase the farm production in the country.

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